

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend claims 1, 5, and 8 as follows:

1. (TWICE AMENDED) A system for enclosing a load with film, the load being placed on a pallet and having a top, a bottom, and sides, the film being in the form of a sleeve having sides that define an inner space when separated, the system comprising:

a frame including a plurality of vertical members defining an inside of the frame;
a platform positioned within the inside of the frame on which the pallet is receivable;
a clamp for engaging the sides of the load when the pallet is disposed on the platform;
a rack mounted to the frame such that the rack is vertically movable between an upper position in which the rack is above the top of the load and a lower position in which the rack is below the bottom of the load when the pallet is disposed on the platform;
a pair of cross members mounted to the rack such that the cross members are horizontally movable;

engagement means mounted to the cross members for engaging the sides of the film; and
sealing means for sealing the sides of the film together;

~~wherein~~ whereby the load is enclosed by performing the following procedure:

~~placing~~ the pallet is placed on the platform;

~~engaging~~ the sides of the film are engaged with the engagement means when the rack is in the upper position;

~~moving~~ the cross members are moved outwardly to separate the sides of film;

~~moving~~ the rack is moved to the lower position, thereby enveloping the load within the sleeve;

~~engaging~~ the load is engaged with the clamp;

~~separating~~ the platform is lowered to separate the load from the pallet;

~~moving~~ the cross members are moved inwardly so that the sides of the film are brought together;

~~sealing~~ the sides of film are sealed with the sealing means;

~~disengaging~~ the sides of the film are disengaged from the engagement means;

~~moving~~ the cross members are moved outwardly; and

~~replacing~~ the platform is raised to replaced the load on the pallet.

2. (ORIGINAL) A system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the engagement means includes a plurality of vacuum ports disposed on the cross members.

3. (ORIGINAL) A system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the sealing means includes heating elements disposed on the cross members.

4. (ORIGINAL) A system as claimed in claim 1 further comprising cutting means for cutting the film, whereby the system encloses the top of the load by:
sealing the film with the sealing means at a position above the top of the load; and
cutting the film with the cutting means.

5. (TWICE AMENDED) Apparatus for sealing a load ~~place~~ placed on a pallet with film, the load having a bottom positioned against the pallet, the apparatus comprising:
a clamping subsystem for securing the load independently of the pallet; and
a film subsystem for enveloping at least the bottom of the load with the film when the load is secured independently of the pallet by the clamping subsystem.

6. (ORIGINAL) Apparatus as claimed in claim 5 wherein the film subsystem further seal the film below the bottom end of the load.

7. (ORIGINAL) Apparatus as claimed in claim 5 wherein the clamping subsystem includes two horizontally movable plates for clamping the load therebetween.

8. (TWICE AMENDED) Apparatus as claimed in claim 5 wherein the film subsystem includes:

a vertically movable rack;
a pair of horizontally movable cross members disposed on the rack;
an engaging subsystem disposed on the cross members for engaging the film; and
a sealing subsystem for forming a seal the film;

whereby the load is sealed by following the following procedure:

~~engaging the engaging system engages~~ the film ~~with the engaging subsystem~~;

~~moving~~ the cross members are moved outwardly to define an inner space within the film;

~~lowering~~ the rack is lowered to a position below the bottom of the load so that the film descends over the stack of cartons and envelops the stack of cartons within the inner space of the film;

~~securing the clamping system secures~~ the load independently of the pallet ~~with the clamping subsystem~~;

~~separating the platform is lowered to separate~~ the load from the pallet;

~~forming the sealing subsystem forms~~ a seal in the film below the bottom of the load;

~~disengaging the engaging system disengages from~~ the sides of the film;

~~moving~~ the cross members are moved outwardly; and

~~positioning~~ the load is positioned on a pallet with the seal disposed therebetween by raising the platform.

9. (ORIGINAL) Apparatus as claimed in claim 8 further comprising an injection subsystem including a compressor and an injection nozzle in communication with the compressor and disposed such that gas is injectable into the inner space of the film.

10. (ORIGINAL) Apparatus as claimed in claim 5 wherein the engaging subsystem includes a plurality of vacuum ports disposed on each of the cross members.

11. (ORIGINAL) Apparatus as claimed in claim 5 wherein the sealing subsystem includes a heat impulse bar mounted to at least one of the cross members.